

# HOUSE REVIEW



## Selected features of House of Representatives business

Sitting period 28 May – 6 Jun 2024 (no. 70)

The first sitting fortnight of the Winter sittings featured the passage of 10 bills, a first speech by the Member for Cook and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Federation Chamber. Proceedings on the budget bills continued to be a key focus of the House.

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### **First Speech by the Member for Cook**

On 28 May, the Minister for International Development and the Pacific moved by leave that standing and sessional orders be suspended to enable the new Member for Cook to make a statement immediately and without a time limit. When the question was agreed, and the Chair reminded all Members about the usual courtesies extended to Members making their first speech, the Member made his first speech to the House.

### **Marking the death of a former Member**

On 28 May the Speaker informed the House of the death of the Hon Lou Stuart Lieberman AM the Member for Indi from 1993 to 2001. As a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased all Members present stood in silence.

### **Motions to suspend standing and sessional orders without notice**

On 29 May the Leader of the Australian Greens moved to suspend standing and sessional orders to allow him to move a motion relating to the recognition of the state of Palestine that was defeated on division.

Later that day, the Member for Kennedy moved a suspension motion to allow him to move a motion relating to the House expressing support for the people of Israel. Debate was adjourned and the motion became an order of the day and the order of the day is listed on the Notice Paper. Under standing order 42, private Members' orders of the day are removed from the Notice Paper if not called on within eight consecutive sitting Mondays.

There were 5 motions to suspend standing orders without notice. One motion was defeated on division after the time allotted for the debate and debate was adjourned on the remaining motions.

### **30th Anniversary of the Federation Chamber –**

On Thursday 6 June, the Deputy Speaker made a statement in relation to the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Federation Chamber. The Federation Chamber first met on 8 June 1994 and was originally named the Main Committee (Legislation). Following amendments to standing orders, the Main Committee was renamed to the Federation Chamber in 2012.

## **Legislation**

### *Introductions*

During the fortnight, 14 Government bills were presented. This included bills related to environment protection and information and a bill to amend the *Export Control Act 2020*.

Two private Members' bills were introduced on Monday 3 June. The Member for Berowra presented a bill calling for the establishment of a commission of inquiry into antisemitism at Australian universities and the Member for Calare presented a bill calling for businesses to accept cash

payments for certain transactions. On 6 June, the Member for Berowra moved a suspension of standing and sessional orders to allow his bill to be called on immediately be debated and pass through all stages. The Minister for Climate Change and Energy moved that the debate be adjourned which passed on division.

#### *Passing the House*

On Monday 3 June the House debated the second reading of the *Net Zero Authority Bill 2024*. At the conclusion of the debate the question on the second reading was put and a division called for. The time being after 6.30pm, the division was deferred pursuant to standing order 133(c). The next opportunity for the division was after the Matter of Public Importance the following day, as standing order 133(b) applies on Tuesdays prior to 2pm. The question was put and agreed on division, the bill was read a second time, a message recommending appropriation was reported from the Governor-General and consideration in detail stage commenced. The Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, by leave, moved government amendments together that were agreed to on the voices. The Members for Mackellar, Wentworth and Warringah each moved sets of amendments by leave together which were disagreed to on division. The Member for Indi moved several sets of amendments together, by leave, with one set agreed on the voices. The bill in its amended form was agreed to on division and the bill was read a third time.

The three 2024-2025 annual appropriation bills also passed the House. In accordance with a resolution of the House on 28 May, Appropriation Bill No. 1 was returned to the House from the Federation Chamber and immediately after prayers on 4 June, the question on the second reading was put and passed and the bill was read a second time. The bill then stood referred back to the Federation Chamber, where consideration in detail commenced later that afternoon. Before consideration began, the Deputy Speaker reminded Members that the resolution set the order and timing for consideration of portfolios and that the terms of the resolution provided the dates and times after which at the first opportunity the question ‘that the proposed expenditure be agreed to’ for each portfolio would be put. The proposed expenditures for each portfolio were considered in accordance with this timetable, with the final question—that the remainder of the bill be agreed to—put and passed on 6 June. Appropriation Bill No. 2 and Appropriation (Parliamentary Departments) Bill No. 1 were then each read a second time in turn and ordered to be reported to the House without amendment. Later that afternoon, all three bills were agreed to and read a third time.

#### *Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea) Bill 2024*

On Thursday 30 May, the Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea) Bill 2024 was introduced. Following the adjournment of the debate on the bill, under standing order 143(b), the Leader of the Nationals moved, without notice, that the bill be referred to the House Standing Committee on Agriculture for consideration and an advisory report by 8 October 2024. After a bill is read for the first time but before the question on the motion for the second reading is put, a motion can be moved without notice to refer a bill to a committee for an advisory report. The motion was negatived on division. The Minister for Agriculture subsequently referred an inquiry into this bill to the Standing Committee on Agriculture to provide an advisory report by 21 June.

#### **Question Time**

On occasion during Question Time the Speaker will announce the presence of a distinguished visitor or visitors. During the fortnight there were several such visitors including a delegation of 16 members from the United States Congress on 30 May. On 3 June the Speaker informed the House that the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Relations of the Kingdom of Lesotho was present in the gallery.

#### **Matter of Public Importance**

On 6 June, the Speaker announced that two definite matters of public importance had been proposed. In accordance with standing order 46(d), the Speaker selected the matter proposed by the Member for Deakin. The proposed discussion was supported by eight Members, rising in their place.

Following the commencement of the discussion, the Leader of the House moved, pursuant to standing order 46(e), that the business of the day be called on. This question was immediately put, and agreed on division and the next order of the day was called on. The motion ‘That the business of the day be called on’ is moved to end the Matter of Public Importance as it is a discussion on a topical issue that no vote is taken on, so there is no question before the House.

### **Parliamentary committees**

Committees continued their work during the fortnight with meetings, public hearings and presentation of reports. Four reports were presented during the period including reports from the Standing Committee on Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights. The Chair of the committee and two other Members made statements on the report by leave and the Chair moved a motion that the House take note of the report and that the order of the day be referred to the Federation Chamber for debate. An additional 18 government responses to committee reports were presented.

### **Communication with the Senate**

Only the House sat this fortnight with Senate committees conducting estimates hearings. Consequently, communication between the Houses was limited. A series of messages were reported to the House on Tuesday 28 May, mostly returning bills without amendment. A message was reported returning the Treasury Laws Amendment (Support for Small Business and Charities and Other Measures) Bill 2023 and informing the House that the Senate insisted on its amendments disagreed to by the House and requesting reconsideration. Once the House had agreed to consider the message immediately, the Assistant Treasurer moved that the House insist on disagreeing to the amendments insisted on by the Senate. Following debate, the motion was carried on division 73:68. A message conveying the House’s decision will be transmitted to the Senate and it is a decision of the Senate as to how it will respond.

The House is scheduled to meet next on 24 June.

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### ***Further information on the work of the House***

[Bills and legislation](#)—access bills, explanatory memoranda, amendments, speeches, information about key stages of a bill’s consideration, and a tracking option

[Live Minutes](#)—a real time summary of House decisions and proceedings. When used in conjunction with the [Daily Program](#), the Live Minutes are a simple way to track the House’s work each day

[House of Representatives Practice](#) 7 ed., 2018—the most authoritative guide to House procedure

[House of Representatives Standing and Sessional Orders](#), as at 2 August 2022—the House’s rules of procedure

[Procedural Digest](#)—a record of selected procedural events in the House of Representatives Chamber and the Federation Chamber. It includes Speaker’s rulings, precedents and unusual situations.